

## Ramon Llull in his Historical Context

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### ABSTRACT

In this article the life, thought and works of the Majorcan writer, philosopher and missionary Ramon Llull (*ca.* 1232-1316) are presented in the context of his time: politics, academia, spirituality and currents of thought. Llull has often been portrayed as an extravagant, eccentric character but here he emerges as a coherent personality whose actions and work were fully integrated into the world in which he was called upon to live.

**KEY WORDS:** Llull, Lullian studies, Lullism, medieval philosophy, interconfessional dialogue

### LLULL, A MAN OF HIS TIME

Though Ramon Llull — alongside Antoni Gaudí — is probably the best known figure of Catalan culture the world over, it is extremely common to find him depicted as an extravagant character who undertook strange, foolhardy projects.<sup>1</sup> For a long time Llull was seen, at best as a genius whose emergence is difficult to account for, and at worst as an incomprehensible lunatic. But modern Lullian studies have contributed decisively to putting him into context. Let us see how, concentrating on three basic aspects of his activity.<sup>2</sup>

In the first place the impulse that prompted Llull's sudden, radical change of life, his decision to forsake his worldly life and family, and the determination he showed throughout the ensuing fifty years to spread his missionary message, must be related to certain spiritual concerns that became widespread among Christian laymen during the 12th and 13th centuries. Their desire to imitate Jesus and the apostles as they appear in the gospels developed into a personal vocation for holiness, whereas the type of spirituality that was confined to specialists — monks who cut themselves off from the world and interceded on behalf of the laity — left them feeling distinctly dissatisfied. Francis of Assisi (1181/82-1226) was the most significant product of this trend and the Church was keen to offer him as a model on account of his orthodoxy. Thus Llull was not the only Christian layman who felt he had been

called to dedicate his life to the propagation of the faith without giving up his secular status, in other words, without entering the religious life.<sup>3</sup>

Another contemporary example, who was close to Llull, was Arnau de Vilanova (*ca.* 1238-1240-1311), a man of great religious sensitivity. His preoccupation with spiritual matters began around 1288, when he was a eminent physician in the service of the Catalan royal household, and focused mainly on the imminent coming of the Antichrist. In anticipation of the end of the world and the tribulations the Antichrist was to bring, he exhorted the faithful and the church hierarchy to lead more evangelical lives and mend their ways, but his insistence and vehemence brought him into open conflict with the theologians.<sup>4</sup>

In the second place, it was exceptional for a layman without any formal education to produce such a fabulously ambitious and extensive intellectual output as Llull did (260 titles on the most diverse topics!). We should not overlook, however, that eagerness to attain knowledge hitherto reserved to the clergy — about philosophy, theology, health care, and the world — can be detected among laymen of all ranks throughout 13th century. There was a veritable breakdown of the barriers between the cultural training of different social groups. Translations of scientific works into vernacular tongues, which began to circulate at precisely this period, are a clear illustration of this trend. This use of the vernacular from the early 14th century to disseminate scientific and technical knowledge, in contrast to the official wisdom of the universities and the Church which was transmitted in Latin, help understand why Llull wrote part of his scientific and philosophical output in Catalan from very early on (starting in 1274): he was addressing the same audience of city dwellers, both burghers and aristocrats, who would soon be consuming

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the technical tracts in prose about health, astrology and commercial practices that are known to us.<sup>5</sup>

In the third place, the pivotal place occupied by the conversion of non-Christians in Lull's projects can be related to the fact that in the 13th century the newly founded mendicant orders had given a new dimension and a new impetus to missionary work and controversies with Jews and Muslims. This is why R. I. Burns has referred to the "13th century dream of conversion". Ramon Lull's repeatedly expressed desire to give his life for this cause is closely akin to the model of the Franciscan missions, which revolved around personal testimony and martyrdom. On the other hand, his life-long project of founding schools where missionaries could obtain language tuition and training is reminiscent of the policy followed by the Dominicans.<sup>6</sup>

Ramon de Penyafort (ca. 1185-1275), a master-general of the entire Dominican order (1238), encouraged the foundation of monasteries where missionaries could be taught oriental languages and study the Torah, the Talmud, the Koran and the Haddith. The first Dominican *studium arabicum* seems to have been established in Palma (Majorca) around 1232 and to have operated on a more or less regular basis until 1259. Many more were set up afterwards (in Xàtiva, Murcia, Valencia and elsewhere). The strategy consisted in studying the languages and basic texts of non-Christians so as to be able to point out the 'errors' they contained. Penyafort was also involved in organizing theological disputations between missionaries and representatives of other religions, notably the one held at the royal palace in Barcelona in 1263 in the presence of James I between the Jewish rabbi Moshe ben Nahman (Nahmanides) and the Dominican Pau Cristià, a converted Jew. These public debates, however, failed to yield any clear conclusions or concrete results: instead the Dominicans' technique of basing their arguments on the authorities (texts and authors) used by their opponents led to endless discussions about how these authorities were to be interpreted.<sup>7</sup> Lull summarized this very well in his *Disputació de cinc savis* (1294):

[...] for one can interpret the authorities in different ways and have different opinions about them, so that words are multiplied and understanding turns to confusion.<sup>8</sup>

Ramon de Penyafort was also behind the various works of apologetics and polemics produced by the Catalan Dominican Ramon Martí (1230-1284). These included *Pugio fidei contra Iudaeos* (1278), a vast manual on Judaism for the use of missionaries with a title clearly indicative of its harsh intentions (it means "the dagger of faith against the Jews"). Martí may also be the author of an Arabic-Latin, Latin-Arabic vocabulary known as *Vocabulista in arabico*, which is known to have been written somewhere in the Majorca-Valencia area in the 13th century.

In several of his works Lull inserted an anecdote to show that the infidels refuse to give up one religion and

embrace another solely on the grounds of faith. It tells how a missionary succeeded in convincing the Sultan of Tunis that the Muslim faith he professed was in error, but the only thing he could offer him in exchange was belief in the Christian credo. The sultan was bitterly disappointed and the result was that the missionary not only failed to win over a new Christian but deprived the sultan of all faith. Lull emphasizes that infidels do not want to exchange one opinion for another: they want to exchange opinion for true knowledge. Consequently, "authorities" are of no use to them because what they want are "(necessary) reasons".<sup>9</sup>

We also have evidence that a merchant by the name of Inghetto Contardo — a well documented personage who played a prime role in the economic and political life of Genoa — was holding disputations with Majorca's Jewish community in 1286, shortly after arriving on the island. According to a later anonymous work recreating these debates, the *Disputatio contra iudeos*, the layman Contardo surpassed any missionary friar in efficacy and competence thanks to the dialectical skills he had acquired as a merchant and his theological training. There are clear parallels between Lull and Contardo who, moreover, were contemporaries and travelled in largely the same area (though there is no indication they were ever in touch). Lull, in his *Liber per quem poterit cognosci quae lex sit magis bona, magis magna et etiam magis vera* (1313), comments on the phenomenon of merchants whose activities brought them in contact with non-Christians and discussed religion with them, though Lull is referring to the ignorance of these laymen and the need to equip them with tools for defending the faith.<sup>10</sup>

Thus the 'Lull phenomenon' arose in the midst of a late medieval context marked by the spiritual, intellectual and missionary concerns of Christian laymen and this context helps to explain him.

## A MID-LIFE CRISIS

Ramon Lull was born in Majorca around 1232. In 1229 King James I of Catalonia and Aragon had occupied the island and made it part of his realm. Lull was the son of rich settlers from Barcelona who followed the king in his expansionist undertakings and for whom the newly conquered territory was an opportunity to prosper. Throughout Lull's youth, Majorca was a motley and complex world, a land of contrasting faiths, interests, races and customs. It had been a Muslim land for three centuries and was now being colonized. Many Islamic inhabitants who had stayed on there were now living in servitude. Nor should we forget that Jewish communities existed in several towns on the island.<sup>11</sup> This confluence of cultures was to leave its mark on Lull's ideals in later years.

Lull probably received the same education as other sons of middle-class families: basic knowledge of doctrine, rudiments of reading and writing (perhaps even in

Latin), and the whole cultural and ideological background proper to the dominating class (customs, norms, legends, reading matter, and so on). Moreover the lack of clear structures in a recently conquered land implied certain limitations, though the nature of these is difficult to define. In his youth he was apparently connected to the royal household, though we have no way of being sure of this. He may even have held a post in the household of the second son of King James, the future James II of Majorca. His experience of court life (albeit in a very minor court) would have familiarized him with the world of politics and government. We do know for sure that he enjoyed a position of some prominence and affluence, for his family had considerable property on the island.

Ramon Llull married a certain Blanca Picany and had children (the names of two of them are known: Domènec and Magdalena). He confesses several times in his works that he led a dissipated, disorderly life, devoting himself to worldly pursuits and spurning God. This was little worse than the usual lifestyle of the well-to-do layman.<sup>12</sup> But then came his total break with the past.

A contemporary document known as the *Vita coetanea* is an outstanding source of information about the life of Ramon Llull. It is a biography written by a monk from the Charterhouse in Paris and based on what Llull himself told him when he was about eighty years old (1311).<sup>13</sup> The beginning of the *Vita* relates this change of lifestyle, which began with a supernatural event of the type that is characteristic of the lives of the saints. One night, while Ramon was writing a love song to a lady, he had a vision of Christ on the cross. Horrified, he stopped what he was doing and jumped into bed. He tried to forget the alarming sign, but a week later he had the same vision again, and then again, until he had seen it five times in all. All this apparently happened towards 1263, when Ramon was about thirty years old. Llull realized that God was asking him to make a radical change. In the *Vita* this change is called a "conversion to penitence", which meant living in the manner of laymen who led exemplary lives, in terms of piety, sobriety, charity and penitence, and wore a distinctive type of religious habit, but without giving up their secular status (i.e. without entering the religious life).<sup>14</sup>

The life of Saint Francis provided a key model for Llull's conversion, and one that was not very far off in time. Francis, a young burgher from Assisi, was also living a dissipated life when he felt the call to give everything up and live in total fidelity to the message of the gospel. Llull did indeed renounce the world: he left his wife and children, though we know that he always kept in touch with them, and he also gave up part of his possessions. In a document dated 1276, Blanca Picany complains to King James II of Majorca that her husband "has become so contemplative that he pays no attention to the management of his temporal possessions and, as a result, his possessions are being lost or destroyed" and she begs the king to appoint an steward.<sup>15</sup> Llull then set off on a long pilgrimage to the shrines of Our

Lady of Rocamadour (in southern France) and Saint James (at Compostela, in Galicia).

Llull gradually defined his project for a life at the service of a threefold cause: he would devote his entire life to working for the conversion of non-Christians; he would write the best book ever written to denounce the errors of non-Christians; and he would promote the foundation of monasteries where missionaries could study the languages spoken by non-Christians. It is easy to see that the central importance of the problem of non-Christians in Llull's triple plan arose out of a particular social situation: that of Majorca, a frontierland, where the existence of three different cultures (Christian, Muslim and Jewish) was a tangible reality.

### A SELF-EDUCATED MAN

Llull was well aware of the limits of the education he had received. For one thing he was not sufficiently well versed in Latin, the language of culture and schooling, which brought with it, as we should bear in mind, a command of grammar and rhetoric. Nor did he have sufficient knowledge of Arabic, the language that anyone who wanted to communicate efficiently with the Muslims, the most numerous and powerful group of non-Christians, of necessity had to master.

At this point, the *Vita* tells us, Llull had a conversation in Barcelona with Ramon de Penyaafort (ca. 1185-1275), the former master-general of the Dominicans, who was also a counsellor to King James the Conqueror, a founder of missionary schools for his brothers in religion, and an eminent specialist in canon law in Rome. Llull discussed with him the possibility of his going to study in Paris at the most important university in the whole of Christendom. The *Vita* says that the Dominican advised him against this and persuaded him to return to Majorca. We do not know exactly how the meeting went. Perhaps Ramon de Penyaafort could not quite fathom the strange Majorcan's plans, but we cannot rule out the possibility that Llull used this episode and the Dominican's prestige to justify his lack of an orthodox academic background.<sup>16</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, his decision to go back to Majorca instead of studying at a university had far-reaching consequences in that it endowed his entire system of thought and all his actions with a priceless originality. The explanation for Llull's way of doing things lies partly in the fact that he was self-educated. This prevented him from assimilating academic habits and consequently he was unaffected by the values implicit in these habits (or was capable of questioning them). It is easy to see that had Llull entered the academic world when he first became concerned with religious matters, he would in all likelihood have adopted the established system and terminology offered to him there. Medieval culture, for instance, tended to conceal novelty under the mask of repetition (one of the habits that made the monk). The technique,

which was learnt in the classroom, consisted of commenting on commentaries by other authors, justifying each commentary with references to the authorities, and thus always appearing to say nothing new. Llull, as a layman, had not acquired this habit and he pretends to be innovating even when he is really repeating. And perhaps it is partly because he did not acquire this habit that he values the 'authorities' and their relationship to reason in a different way. The originality of Llull's thought has little to do, in principle, with the originality of his doctrines on particular subjects. As we will see, his *Art*, viewed as a system for producing discourse, is in itself an alternative to the scholastic *maniera*. This originality was also the cause of many of the difficulties of communication which Llull experienced.

In Majorca Llull learnt enough Latin and Arabic to be able to express himself. He aimed at efficacy rather than correctness or elegance.<sup>17</sup> He familiarized himself with a few basic works of Christian, Muslim and possibly Hebrew culture too, though it is difficult to know which ones. Llull would have had easier access to education and books in Montpellier, the city in Occitania where King James I had been born and which belonged to the Catalan-Aragonese crown, than in Majorca. Montpellier came under the Balearic crown when the kingdom was divided on the death of James I in 1276 and consequently its relations with Majorca were extremely close. For many centuries it had had a prestigious school of medicine and from 1242 onwards there was a faculty of arts as well. As is well known, logic and philosophy (which students learnt by 'commenting' on Aristotle) constituted the core of the curriculum in the arts faculty, though grammar was also taught and students acquired the rudiments of other liberal arts (such as astronomy). Montpellier was an open city with a major Jewish quarter. Many scientific works of Arab origin were translated there. We know that Llull went there several times between 1275 and 1287 and it seems likely that he was influenced by Montpellier's intellectual atmosphere.<sup>18</sup>

### THE *LLIBRE DE CONTEMPLACIÓ*

When the long period of study that followed his conversion to penitence and the time he devoted to pilgrimage were over, Llull wrote his first works: the *Compendium logicae Algazelis* (1271-2?), of which a Latin version and a later rhyming translation into Catalan have come down to us, and the *Llibre de Contemplació en Déu* (1273-4?).<sup>19</sup> The former is basically a summary of the part devoted to logic of *The Tendencies of Philosophers* by the Muslim thinker al-Ghazali. Though this work was already available in Latin, Llull drew on the Arabic original. He presented his Latin version as a handbook for students who were beginning to study philosophy and theology, and his Catalan version as the outcome of his desire to disseminate the rudiments of logic and philosophy among laymen

who did not know Latin or Arabic. But, as Tomàs Carerras Artau remarks, the *Compendium* looked like an exercise book.<sup>20</sup> Llull did not confine himself to condensing, rearranging and completing the basics of logic as set out by al-Ghazali, *ad consolationem scholarium* and probably for his own use as well: he added questions drawn from the philosophical part of the same work and theological considerations which are not from the Muslim thinker's text at all, including some that concern the relationship between faith and understanding in the proofs of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. The choice of the materials he interpolated show which way his interests were leaning at the time. Having decided to devote his life to the conversion of the 'infidels', he had orientated his research towards the way techniques of argumentation and disputation as used in scholastic logic could be applied to theological questions. This topic is also very much present in the *Llibre de contemplació*.

The *Llibre de contemplació* occupies seven fat volumes in the edition of his works entitled *Obres de Ramon Llull*, and nearly 1200 well-filled, two-column pages of very small print in the *Obres essencials*. It is a monumental work, the largest in his entire output, and comprises 355 chapters arranged into 40 distinctions and 5 books. There is also a final chapter, number 366, which is not part of any book or distinction. Each chapter has the same structure: thirty paragraphs or versicles, divided into ten groups of three versicles each. The author justifies this rigid pattern by reference to numerous symbols. The five books commemorate the five wounds of the crucified Christ. The forty distinctions recall the forty days Jesus spent in the desert fasting. The number of distinctions per book varies but it always has a symbolic explanation: the first book has nine, because of the number of heavens; the second has thirteen, because of the twelve apostles and Christ; the third has ten because of the five bodily senses and the five spiritual senses, and so on. The 365 chapters that make up the forty distinctions correspond to the days of the year, and the extra chapter, which is in four parts, corresponds to the extra day that is added every four years to make a leap year. Finally, the ten parts of each chapter evoke the commandments, the three sections into which each is subdivided evoke the Trinity, and the thirty sections so obtained are a reference to the thirty coins Judas received for betraying Jesus. The whole work is divided into three volumes under a single title, *Llibre de contemplació en Déu*, in memory of the unity of God.<sup>21</sup>

The contents that unfold within this structure respond, formally, to an encyclopaedic approach. But the nature and goal of the work are essentially mystical and orientated towards contemplation. In Llull, however, contemplation always leads ultimately to action, because he considers that correct knowledge of God is inseparable from the love of God, that the love of God is incompatible with the failure to render to him, by practical means, all that is due to him, in other words, to do everything possible to convert the 'infidels'. The headings summarizing the



theme of each distinction show that the first book deals with the 'properties' of God himself and the second with the virtues of God as the creator and ordainer of the world; the third book, in accordance with the symbolic number of distinctions it contains, is devoted to the bodily and spiritual senses of Man; the fourth, which addresses topics to do with natural philosophy and Christian theology, focuses on the problem of the relationship between faith and reason and attempts to apply philosophical argumentation to Catholic articles of faith; and the fifth and last book deals with love and prayer, which are directed towards God, the final cause. Thus the headings form a circular, contemplative itinerary in which God, in keeping with the traditional pattern of procession and return, is the beginning and the end. He is considered first in his essence, then in his work, and finally as the supreme good, the object of love and prayer. The middle book is concerned with Man and his senses, which are viewed as the condition of possibility for the soul's ascent from nature to its creator. The last two books basically offer *arts e maneres* (ways and means) of successfully accomplishing this ascent. The encyclopaedic itinerary superficially marked out by these headings, however, masks the true nature of the text: in it discourses on divine and human matters are intermingled because it advances, like an endless prayer, through antithetical parallels that are first established and then broadened, and through oppositions, responding to exhortative objectives, between the perfections of God and the imperfections of Man.

Josep E. Rubio has aptly described the *Llibre de contemplació* as a first attempt to organize the material Llull had been collecting during the adventure of his intellectual training.<sup>22</sup> Seen in this light, the book reflects both the interests that polarized his readings and the limits of his training at the time he wrote it. Though it can be claimed, in the conventional manner, that the *Llibre de contemplació* marks the end of Llull's period of learning, if we compare it to his later output, it becomes clear that he devoted considerable efforts throughout his life, and especially while he was in Paris, to keeping abreast of the logical, philosophical and theological contents of the academic curriculum and the most burning controversies of the day. In any event, three doctrines that were to be crucial to his entire output already play an important role in this work: the theory of the divine attributes (which are viewed as identical to the divine essence, and can therefore be equated to one another), the doctrine of the first and second intention (the original source of which is in Aristotle and which regulates the relationship between the final cause and what is ordained as a means towards the final cause), and the claim that the dogmas of the Catholic faith can be proved.<sup>23</sup> These three doctrines were already outlined in the *Compendium logicae Algazelis*.

Lullist scholars have been discussing for years whether there was a Arabic original (now lost) of all or part of this work and how the passages that might indicate this are to be interpreted. The question remains unsolved. However,

the material collected and arranged in the *Llibre de contemplació* does include material of Arab origin. Book V would appear to be a case in point. According to Dominique Urvoy it can be interpreted as an attempt to incorporate (for polemical purposes) the substance of Muslim thought as known to Llull at the time.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover Llull's apparently ingenuous statement in the final chapter, number 366, to the effect that the second volume is better than the first and the third is better than the second, can be inferred to mean that the *Llibre de contemplació* is a *work in progress*.<sup>25</sup> The order in which the material is presented reflects the ever deeper knowledge of the philosophical, theological and methodological matters of prime concern to him which Llull was acquiring. Changes in terminology and a few conceptual contradictions between the initial and definitive doctrines are part of this process.

Chapter 366 of the *Llibre de contemplació* also lists the work's virtues and goes on to offer instructions for its use. One of the main qualities mentioned is that it teaches the reader to debate with and convert those who are in error. Llull maintains that the book's methods would enable the whole world to be converted to the Catholic faith and that it served to enhance the honour, power and wealth of the Roman church.<sup>26</sup> The third volume, comprising books 4 and 5, shows a clear preoccupation — which we mentioned earlier when discussing the versions of al-Ghazali's *Logic* — with ways of applying the techniques of argumentation and disputation to theological matters, notably those questions in which different religions are at variance, a problem that was part and parcel of the conversion of the 'infidels'. These two books reflect Llull's almost compulsive struggle to find methods (*arts e maneres*) that would enable missionaries to carry out their tasks efficiently. This struggle, in a more moderate form, had already underlain earlier parts of the *Llibre de contemplació*, and here it is intermingled with the attempt to organize the conceptual material into 'figures' consisting mainly of trees and symbolic letters. The fourth book, for instance, is built on the symbolism of the tree. Each distinction corresponds to a tree and the chapters into which it is divided are its branches. In the last and longest distinction in the entire work, which is part of the fifth book, Llull employs the algebraic method of replacing the conceptual elements of the argument by letters. In the chapters belonging to this distinction, this method is used to propose various methods of carrying out activities which the author considers suitable for his readers in the light of the doctrine of the two intentions: the ascent of the faculties of the soul towards God, contemplation, and so on. One of these arts, in keeping with one of the most characteristic preoccupations displayed by Llull in the works he wrote at the period, is the art "whereby [one] learns how the understanding draws right or wrong conclusions". This art includes a proposal for adding to the three figures that can be used in syllogistic argumentation, according to Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, a fourth 'theological' figure made up of the

letters symbolizing the divine attributes.<sup>27</sup> The last two arts proposed by Llull are the art of discovering truth in disputation and the art of the manifestation of truth and falsehood. The latter claims to be a compendium of all the arts proposed so far. In it the systematic combinations of letters into chambers attain the prominence that was to be characteristic of the later *Arts*.<sup>28</sup> The *Llibre de contemplació* which, as we have seen, claimed to possess the virtue of teaching the art of disputation and converting those who are in error, already hints, in its final chapters, that these activities might possibly be performed in accordance with a single *Art*, a single technique, offering all the necessary principles and rules.

### ART AND 'ILLUMINATION'

Llull's attempts to devise techniques for interreligious disputation, which he tries to regulate and unify in the *Llibre de contemplació*, provide the immediate precedent for the compilation of the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (ca. 1274), written immediately afterwards, which incorporates some of them.<sup>29</sup> This, the first of Llull's four great *Arts*, was conceived as a manual for teaching and learning which contained the essential notions of the discipline and had to be useful as a quick reference book as well. As often happens with manuals, the title and the subject are the same. But this particular title also contained a reference — and this was no coincidence — to the name of another well known discipline in the arts faculties of medieval universities: dialectics, traditionally referred to as *ars inveniendi*. Students studied dialectics by reading Aristotle's *Topics*, a work dedicated to the art of disputation in general. The Aristotelian-scholastic *ars inveniendi* is the matrix of Llull's *Art*, which was devised, like dialectics, as a technique for discovering truth. It sought to answer questions (double questions, with a negative and an affirmative statement as their possible answers) and reasoned on the basis of topics (literally 'places', and termed "universals" by Llull), general principles for validating or refuting the affirmative or negative statements (termed "particulars") that can provide the answers to the questions. Llull claimed furthermore that his *Art*, though tailor-made for disputation about matters of faith, also possessed two of the most characteristic virtues of the old dialectics: the ability to argue on any subject and the ability to assess the relevance of principles belonging to all sciences, which made it a sort of art of arts.<sup>30</sup>

After the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, Llull wrote other versions of his *Art*. When read in succession, they reveal the great efforts he deployed to perfect the topics and increase the efficiency of his *Art* as a machine for generating arguments. In one *Art* after the other, Llull proposes new topics and rejects or improves the existing ones (by simplifying them or making them more sophisticated). The topics *par excellence* of all the versions of his

*Art* are the figures, which present-day readers approaching Llull's artistic works for the first time find so surprising. In the Lullian *Arts* we find: 1) basic circular figures symbolized by letters, as in algebra (each figure includes a series of simple principles or terms to do with a particular subject, which are also represented by letters), 2) complex or combinatory circular figures (featuring several concentric circles that can be rotated to form different combinations of simple principles or basic figures), and 3) tabular figures or figures with combinations (showing the binary or ternary relationships that can be obtained by using the combinatory mechanism represented by a complex circular figure). These three types of figures constitute the arsenal of the Lullian *Art* in its successive versions, its stock of 'universals'.<sup>31</sup> Users can draw on them to build arguments for solving questions. The establishment of a limited number of simple elements — made easy to remember by the figures and the alphabetic notation — together with the combinatory mechanism which makes it possible to find all the possible relationships constitute the condition of possibility for the 'compendiousness' evoked by the work's title in its first literary version. The combinatory capacity, in short, makes it possible — to express it in accordance with an Aristotelian saying which perfectly describes the great virtue of topical reasoning — for the simple elements, or principles of the *Art*, though "minimums in quantity", to be "potential" maximums as well (in terms of their ability to find a large number of arguments).

In the *Vita coetanea*, the making of the *Art* is associated with the firm resolution that supposedly entered Llull's heart after the crucified Christ appeared to him five times and he decided to serve him by dedicating the rest of his life to the conversion of the Muslims: "he himself in time was to write a book, the best book in the world, against the errors of the infidels". It also tells how, much later on, after Llull's conversion to penitence, his pilgrimages, and his years of study, the Lord enlightened his mind on a mountain-top by showing him the *forma i manera* in which the book was to be written. The account goes on to say that, having been thus enlightened, he gave infinite thanks to God, came down from the mountain, and started to plan and write the best of all books, "which he first named *Art major* [i.e. *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*] and later *Art general*, and in accordance with the principles of this book he wrote many more".<sup>32</sup> In point of fact, Llull never mentioned this supposed enlightenment until twenty years after it was supposed to have occurred. Not until the middle of the last decade of the 13th century, when he had become a propagandist for the crusade, did he begin to present his *Art* as a gift from God. The first reference to the donation is probably in *Petitio Raymundi pro conversione infidelium ad Coelestinum V papam* (1294).<sup>33</sup> Llull had already expressed fears in the *Llibre de contemplació* about the effects his "slight authority" might have on his undertakings and was constantly in search of literary strategies to overcome this handicap.<sup>34</sup> And refer-

ring to the *Art* as a gift from God could have an impact on certain audiences.

Though Llull conceived his *Art* as a technique for effective disputation on matters of faith, he also presented it from the outset as a science. He was convinced, as we have seen, that nobody espouses a new faith because his former faith has been shown, by dialectical means, to be false unless the contents of the new faith are demonstrated by “necessary reasons” (in other words, scientifically). The evolution of his *Art* arose largely out of his wish to adapt its principles and operation to the scientific character it claimed to possess. Whereas the title of the first manual of Llull’s *Art* alluded to the scholastic conception of dialectics, the manual of the second version (*Art demonstrativa*, ca. 1283) bore a title which matched — and again, it was no coincidence — the denomination of that part of logic — *ars demonstrandi* — which, according to scholasticism, contained the rules of scientific knowledge. Students learnt the principles and rules of scientific knowledge by reading Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*. Llull does not explicitly invoke the authority of Aristotle in the introduction to his work. He does, however, justify the new denomination of his technique by referring to the probative nature of his *Art* which, he says, teaches argumentation on the basis of three types of proof. Two of these — *propter quid* (proving the effect from the cause) and *quia* (proving the cause from the effect) — are the types of proof discussed in the *Posterior Analytics* which scholasticism considered proper to science. But to these two types of proof known to the ‘ancients’, Llull added another of his own invention: *per equiparantiam* (through equivalence or by establishing equality). This, in Llull’s view — and also in the light of a particular reading of scholastic principles regarding the degree of necessity of proofs — made it possible to attain greater certainty than *propter quid*, which itself was considered more probative than *quia*, or even the only conclusive proof, in the strict sense of the term.<sup>35</sup>

By disseminating an *Art* that claimed to be investigative and probative at one and the same time, Llull was presenting a method capable, at least in theory, of overcoming the typically scholastic divide between demonstration and heuristics. But this was not the only novel feature of his *Art* in comparison to the system of arts and sciences of his time for Lullian art, as already mentioned, was presented as an art which, like Aristotelian dialectics, could be applied to any subject and to the principles of all sciences, and at the same time it claimed, as an *ars demonstrandi*, to do so in a scientific way. Thus it aimed to constitute a new form of science, one which was impossible according to Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*, but which, if it did exist, would be the most desirable of all: universal science.<sup>36</sup>

But the evolution of the Lullian *Art* cannot be explained solely by the author’s desire to improve its efficiency as an argument-finding technique and his interest in heightening the probative value of the arguments: it also had much

to do with the Illuminated Doctor’s reflections about the conditions of possibility that would make this new science universal and the general nature of its principles. Present-day Lullist scholars usually distinguish between two major stages in the evolution of the *Art*, which are known as the ‘quaternary’ and ‘ternary’ phases, depending on the number of principles their main figures contain (16 in the quaternary phase, i.e. 4 x 4, and 9 in the ternary phase, i.e. 3 x 3). Both the *Arts* mentioned so far, *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (ca. 1274) and *Art demonstrativa* (ca. 1283), belong to the first of these two phases. To simplify one might say that in the Lullian approach the universality of the principles has to do with the fact that any affirmation or negation about any subject also implies an affirmation or negation about God or the author of the statement’s relationship to God. The first *Arts* offer principles which regulate affirmations and negations that are relevant to God and the way one should relate to God. Consequently they are universal in that they make it possible to confirm or refute affirmations and negations which agree with or contradict those principles. In the *Arts* of the second stage, which begins with *Ars inventiva veritatis* (1290) and concludes with *Ars generalis ultima* (1305-8) and its summary, *Ars brevis* (1308), the universality of the principles is of a different nature. Llull, bearing very much in mind the function Aristotle attributed to causality in demonstration, began to conceive this universality on the basis of a Neoplatonic-type conception of causal relationships, tacitly legitimated by the philosophy of Proclus and the theology of Pseudo-Dionysius. This conception enabled him to establish the generality of the simple principles of his *Art* ontologically, by affirming their presence in God as pre-eminent causes and in their effects as semblances of these causes. In the last works of the quaternary phase, which were still based on the *Art demonstrativa*, Llull began to reflect — on the basis of this theory of causality which enabled him to argue that all created beings are made up of divine semblances, to a greater or lesser extent — about the demonstrative, general nature of his art. In the *Ars inventiva veritatis*, the first of the ternary *Arts*, not only did he reduce the number of figures and the number of principles in each figure, but he transformed the artistic devices in the light of the results of these reflections. The Dionysian / Proclian theory of causality through similarity permitted him to view the principles of his *Art* as principles that could be predicated univocally (in keeping with the same definition) about all beings of which they were predicable, without thereby eliminating the differences between the subjects about which they are predicated. Similarity made it possible for different beings to possess the same quality, but also for them to possess it in different ways and to varying degrees. And the sort of generality of principles which this made it possible to establish enabled Llull to build an *Art* in which the principles of knowing coincided with the principles of being.<sup>37</sup> The *Ars generalis ultima* (in the prologue to which Llull justifies the possibility of the new *Art*



on the basis of the Aristotelian theory of science) exploits to the utmost the potentialities of this coincidence.<sup>38</sup>

Llull had no choice but to seek legitimacy for his universal science in one particular theory, that of Aristotle, which was equated, in the 13th century, with science *tout court*. But he maintained that his *Art* overcame what he viewed as the severe shortcomings of Aristotelian science. The Illuminated Doctor stressed in his works that Aristotelian science presents certain anomalies and fails to satisfy what we might anachronistically term the 'scientific community' with respect, for example, to the need to endow certain sciences (such as medicine or theology) with solid foundations. We must also recall the situation at the University of Paris, the leading university of the day, at the period when Llull was devising his method. In 1270 and again in 1277, at roughly the same time as Llull was beginning to work on his *Art* (ca. 1274), the bishop of Paris had condemned numerous theses as a result of the introduction of Aristotle's philosophical works into the curriculum at the Arts Faculty (Aristotle's philosophical works had been prohibited in 1210 and 1231 and in previous centuries he had been read in the Latin West only as the author of treatises on logic). This was the period, in other words, when a crisis erupted over the ecclesiastical project of building a Christian wisdom founded on Aristotelian science. This crisis, as Llull himself was well aware, was the counterpart of two other crises: one of these had prompted the Almohade sultan Abu Yusuf, a few decades earlier, to ban the teaching of Aristotelian logic and philosophy, while the other lay behind a dispute over philosophical studies which arose during those same years among Jewish scholars living in Christian lands around the Mediterranean.<sup>39</sup> This, in short, was the time when it became clear that theology and philosophy offer 'dissonant truths'. And though Llull's *Art* had been designed first and foremost for interreligious disputation, it also sought to provide a solution to this crisis, for it was to serve, not merely to vanquish the 'infidels', but to combat those who practised a philosophy independent of theology and reached conclusions that raised problems for faith. The latter included the 'Averroists', against whom Llull wrote numerous works during his last stay in Paris (1309-11).

Thus Llull who, like the neo-Augustinians of his time, was opposed to the secularization of thought to which the Aristotelization of the curricula would give rise, presented his *Art* as an alternative to Aristotelian science which seemed to make the concordance between philosophy and theology impossible. The absolute generality of the principles of his *Art* — which therefore extended to these two disciplines as well — not only permitted concordance between the two disciplines, according to the Illuminated Doctor, but — because of their contents — also enabled the former to be subordinated to the latter. Furthermore, still according to Llull, it turned theology into a science which depended, epistemologically, not upon faith (which only offered hypotheses to be confirmed or rejected) but on principles, those of the *Art*, which are self-evident. It

was for this very reason — because he considered these principles self-evident and therefore not specifically Christian — that Llull could present his *Art* as a neutral science, capable of turning interreligious disputation into a scientific affair, despite the fact that, in practice, the conclusions of his demonstrative arguments always confirmed the hypotheses offered by the Catholic credo and rejected the others.

The *Art* claimed, in short, to make possible everything Llull considered necessary, notably the concordance of philosophy and theology, the subordination of the former to the latter, the establishment of theology as a true science and, of course, the conversion of the Muslims. The Illuminated Doctor never stopped viewing his *Art* as an arm of mass conversion that would permit the elimination of Islam and the Christianization of all humanity. And whereas the first literary version was conceived as a manual for use in a missionary school in some isolated, idyllic setting, the *Ars generalis ultima* and its portable equivalent, the *Ars brevis*, were designed to be the spiritual arms needed by the crusaders who were to conquer the domains of the 'infidels' by the force of material arms as part of a great military operation to be waged on land and sea. However that may be, the fortunes of Llull's *Art* in the history of thought has less to do with all these uses than with the fact that the strange epistemological artefact he created raised the possibility of decompartmentalizing the 'old science', the possibility, in other words, of overcoming prejudice about the incommunicability of the principles and scope of the different sciences, and of building bridges between scientific doctrine and the discovery of scientific knowledge.

The *Art*, however, was also a *forma e manera* of making books, as can be inferred from the passage of the *Vita coetanea* which refers to it as a gift from God. Llull tends to describe the relationship between his four main *Arts* in terms of filiation: each new *Art* "descends" from its predecessor. But at the same time each *Art* heads a new generation of works, which adopt the *Art*'s principles and procedures, subject it to "interpretations", "commentaries", "introductions", "applications" and "practices", and even transmute its science into literature for the training and edification of the layman.<sup>40</sup> One cannot understand Llull's output correctly without taking into account this genealogical dimension, which also characterizes his more conventionally 'literary' works, such as his two novels: *Blaquerna* (ca. 1283) and the *Llibre de Meravelles* (1288-9).

#### APPROACHING THE POWERFUL: TRAVELS IN THE CHRISTIAN WEST

On 17 October 1276 a papal bull confirmed the establishment of a monastery at Miramar (Majorca). It was to be paid for by James II and thirteen Franciscans were to begin studying Arabic and the *Art* there, in accordance with a project drawn up by Llull. But from 1282 onwards, a va-



riety of conflicts caused upheaval in the territories of the Catalan-Aragonese crown. That same year Peter 'the Great' annexed Sicily, and three years later Philip III of France tried to invade Catalonia. The Pope blessed the attempted invasion as a crusade, but it finished up costing the French king his life and the Catalan king perished soon afterwards. Later (in 1285) Alfons III of Catalonia and Aragon seized the island possessions of his uncle James II (the natural lord of Ramon Llull). James II had the unconditional backing of the papacy in his conflict with his brother Peter. As lord of Montpellier he was also a vassal of the King of France and had allied himself with the French in their crusade against Catalonia. The life of Llull from now until the peace of Anagni (1295) can only be understood against the background of the Rome-France-Majorca axis. From 1282 to 1294 he did not set foot in Majorca or any other part of the Catalan-Aragonese domains. Not until 1294, when the negotiations that were to lead to the treaty of Anagni were underway, did he stop in Barcelona on his way back from Naples and resume his relationship with King James II of Aragon, the son of the deceased Peter 'the Great'. But once he had completed the first of his revised versions of the *Art* (*Art demonstrativa*) in Montpellier, Llull felt it was vital to approach the highest instances of power in Latin Christendom in order to ensure the diffusion of the *Art* and bring his projects to fruition. He knew full well that the success of his undertaking involved arousing the interest of the papal court, the French monarchy, and the University of Paris.

Paris was the hub of the intellectual world and the capital of the most powerful kingdom in the West. Llull went there at least three times.<sup>41</sup> On his first visit, between the middle of 1287 and the end of 1289, he succeeded in being received at court, but he also came up against his first major communications problem: his system of thought and his terminology were too different from those of academia and too complex. He gave a lecture on the *Art* at the university but it was a failure.<sup>42</sup> Back in Montpellier he set about revamping his system in the *Ars inventiva veritatis* (1290), a work to which we have already alluded.

His second stay in the French capital, which took place ten years later, between 1297 and 1299, was less traumatic. He had another meeting with King Philip IV 'the Fair', to whom he dedicated the *Arbre de filosofia d'amor*, but failed to obtain anything specific from him. He also seized the opportunity to show his *Art* in public. That was when he struck up a relationship, which was to have far-reaching repercussions, with Thomas le Myésier, his main disciple in Paris, who compiled the *Electorium* and the *Breviculum*.<sup>43</sup>

The last time Llull was in Paris was between the autumn of 1309 and the autumn of 1311.<sup>44</sup> On this occasion he at least gained some recognition from the university and the King of France: forty masters and bachelors at the faculties of Art and Medicine reacted favourably to his lessons on the *Ars brevis* (a summary of the *Ars generalis ultima*)

and the chancellor of the university and Philip IV gave him letters of recommendation.<sup>45</sup> It was during this period that the Illuminated Doctor, as mentioned earlier, began producing numerous works to combat the 'Averroists' at the Faculty of Arts and called upon the King of France to prohibit the works of Averroes from being read at the University.

His stays at the papal court were not very fruitful either.<sup>46</sup> In 1292, Nicholas IV became the first Franciscan to accede to the papacy. Llull had been authorized a couple of years earlier by the general of the Franciscans, Ramon Gaufredi, to preach in monastic establishments in Italy as a "friend of the order", so his election rekindled the hope that he would be listened to in Rome. But he was disappointed: the Roman curia were too immersed in internal problems. Yet in 1291 Acre, the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land, had fallen into Muslim hands. Islam was advancing, and neither the Catholic monarchs nor the church leaders seemed aware of it.

In 1294, Llull wrote a petition (*Petició*) in Naples setting out his projects and sent it to the newly elected Celestine V, the hermit Pietro da Murrone, who was pope for only five months.<sup>47</sup> In 1295 he returned to Rome and submitted another petition in the same terms to Celestine's successor, Boniface VIII.<sup>48</sup> While in the holy city, he also wrote, in the record time of six months, one of his longest and most complex books: the imposing encyclopaedia *Arbre de ciència*. But by the time he left Rome in 1296 he had obtained nothing from the pontiff. Somewhat embittered over the scant attention paid to his mission, he wrote *Desconhort*, a lament in verse.

On 14 November 1305 Llull attended the coronation of Clement V, a pope under the sway of the French royal house who transferred the pontifical throne to Lyon. Ramon Llull addressed another petition to him, but in vain.

In 1311 Pope Clement V convened a general council in the town of Vienne (Dauphiné) and Llull, thanks to the endorsement he had won in Paris, was able to address it. The *Vita coetanea*, the account he gave to the Carthusians in Paris, was originally conceived as a sort of letter of introduction for Vienne. At the same period he also wrote a strange work in which he engages in conversation with a bad, self-seeking cleric and defends himself against those who denounce him as a madman because of his obstinacy in carrying out the projects he has undertaken for the greater glory of God. The work is entitled *Phantasticus*, and in it Llull speaks in the following terms:

I was a married man with children, quite wealthy, dissolute and worldly. I freely renounced all that to work for the honour of God and the public good, and to exalt the holy faith. I learnt Arabic; I went several times to preach to the Muslims; I was arrested, imprisoned and wounded in the defence of the faith. For forty-five years I have tried to incite the Church and the Christian princes to act for the public good. Now I am old and poor, but my goal remains unchanged, and I

will persevere in this same goal, God willing, until I die.<sup>49</sup>

In Vienne Llull obtained a decision from the council to set up several language schools for missionaries, but it seems that the plan was never implemented.

Though Llull never lost sight of the goals he had set himself, he was capable of varying his methods. Thus while in Barcelona towards the end of 1299, he had a meeting with James II of Aragon (the King of Majorca had once more become a vassal of the King of Aragon, so Llull was now his subject) and was authorized by him to preach in the synagogues and mosques of Catalonia. He presented the *Liber de fine* — his most important work on the crusade — to him in 1305 and sent it to Pope Clement V as well. For the remainder of his life, Llull was to remain in contact with James II of Aragon.<sup>50</sup>

He maintained political relations with a number of Italian republics, including Pisa and Genoa,<sup>51</sup> and with another sovereign from the House of Barcelona, Frederick of Sicily, the brother of James II of Aragon. Though Frederick publicly professed very radical spiritual ideas, akin to those of Arnau de Vilanova, Llull does not seem to have been on very good terms with him. He did however stay on the island in 1313-1314.<sup>52</sup>

## JOURNEYS TO NORTH AFRICA AND THE EAST

Llull made three visits to North Africa: two to Tunis and one to Bougie. To gain a clear understanding of how these journeys turned out and Llull's changing attitude from one journey to the next, they must be related to his personal evolution and that of his work. A. Bonner has referred to these changes as tendencies within periods in Llull's career rather than exclusive positions.<sup>53</sup>

At the outset, while he was developing his system, Llull was fully confident that his *Art* was both good and efficacious and its qualities were sufficiently self-evident for it to prevail without him having to present himself in public as its author. At that period he did not sign his works and introduced himself in stock, self-denigrating terms (of which Saint Augustine, for instance, was so fond) as a guilty wretch, a poor sinner, despised by others, and unworthy for his name to appear in a book. Llull belittled himself to enhance the value of his work as an 'instrument' of God and, in setting out his system, took an idealized view of the world to which it was offered, a view that was both vague and devoid of opponents. The most representative work of the period, in this respect, is undoubtedly the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis* (*Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, written, as stated earlier, between 1274 and 1276). The main character, the Gentile, is unique in Llull's universe: he represents a man who has not experienced revelation and is guided by natural reason alone. Consequently, despite the subtlety of his mind, the truth eludes him and he needs to hear a human voice

that is capable of imparting wisdom. The problem arises when he discovers three such voices, one for each of the monotheistic religions. Thus the Gentile, after discovering God, must endure the outrage of the plurality of religions. By the end of the work the Gentile has listened to the authoritative accounts given by the Jew, the Christian and the Muslim of their respective religions and reached the long-awaited conclusion. So when he meets a fellow-countryman in a forest, he knows what revelation he must make to him. The outcome of their conversation is never explicitly stated because the sages ask the Gentile to keep his choice a secret so as not to condition the rest of their conversation. In fact, if Llull's system is applied, there is no doubt that the Gentile will ask to be baptized. Thus the *Book of the Gentile* is a work steeped in boundless optimism over the chances that Christianity will prevail over other religions.<sup>54</sup>

After Llull's first disappointing experiences in Paris and at the papal court, and after he had simplified and reformulated his *Art* in the *Ars inventiva* (1290) and made his first trip to Tunis (1293), he became aware of the real difficulties of communication his project posed. From then onwards he played an active role as the author (appearing as a character in his own works if necessary) and claimed that his *Art* was an efficacious alternative to the theological and philosophical formulations of his time. He also strove to convince the most influential spheres of society, though they are referred to in general, impersonalized terms.<sup>55</sup> In a third and final stage, which began with his journey to Bougie (1307), Llull clashed directly with specific adversaries, who were depicted in a negative light if necessary (Homer, for example, in the *Disputatio Raimundi christiani et Homeri sarraceni*).<sup>56</sup>

In Tunis in 1293, Llull tried to start up a discussion with the most highly educated citizens of the country in the conviction that, once they had been won over, the rest of the population would follow and embrace the new faith. This was the most widespread tactic employed by Christian missionaries, notably the Catalan Dominicans. What was more unusual was the attitude Llull displayed in the course of this mission, as described in the *Vita coetanea*. Ramon, it states, offered to listen to Muslim scholars' arguments about the truth of the Koranic faith and undertook to adopt their religion if he found these arguments more valid than those of Christianity. This receptive stance would appear to have encouraged his opponents, many of whom took up the challenge. According to the *Vita*, the mission began to produce results. This alarmed certain Muslim leaders, who persuaded the sultan to imprison him. He was condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted to banishment, thanks to the intercession of a religious man who was impressed by Ramon's apostolic zeal. Llull was now sixty years old. The account of this episode given in the *Vita* clearly highlights the contrast between the understanding some Muslim intellectuals showed towards him and the mistrust and hostility of others. It also reveals a tolerance on the part of

government which would have been very difficult to find in Christendom.<sup>57</sup>

In the spring of 1307 Llull set out on his second missionary journey to the Maghrib. This time his destination was Bougie,<sup>58</sup> a city that had been incorporated into the Hafsid state of Tunis in 1240 before becoming an independent emirate from 1284-85 until 1309. Bougie at the time had very close commercial and political ties with the Catalan states, primarily Majorca (treaty of 1302) but also Catalonia-Aragon (treaty of 1309). Not only were there two *alfòndecs* (*funduqs*, or merchants' compounds) in the city, one Catalan and one Majorcan, but here, as in Tunis, there were Catalan-Aragonese militiamen, commanded by Catalans but paid for by the sovereign of Bougie. There were several chapels too (for people from Pisa, Marseille and Majorca) and members of the Trinitarian, Mercedarian, Dominican and Franciscan orders, who attended to the spiritual needs of free Christians and strove to redeem those who were captives.

When Llull arrived in Bougie, he adopted a defiant stance very different from the one he had used in Tunis, by offering to prove that the Muslim faith was false and the Christian faith was true. To any Muslim believer such a claim was an unpardonable offence and the ordinary people reacted irately. The *cadi* sentenced Llull to be imprisoned and in so doing actually saved his life. The *Vita coetanea* gives a detailed account of the discussions between Ramon and the *cadi*, saying that, though the latter was a great philosopher, Llull's reasoning caused him serious embarrassment. The *Vita* goes on to relate the following:

So when Ramon left the *cadi*'s house and made his way to the prison, he was beaten with sticks, and punched, and even roughly dragged along by his flowing beard. Then he was locked into the latrine of the thieves' prison, where he endured hardship for some time. Afterwards he was put into a cell in the same prison.

Ramon spent six months in prison in Bougie, though the Genoese and Catalan residents of the city interceded on his behalf and obtained an improvement in his living conditions. During his captivity he held discussions on religion with various Muslim scholars. Finally the King of Bougie, Abu-l-Baqa Halid, who was resident in Constantine at the time, made the magnanimous gesture of setting him free and expelling him from his domains. The ordeals of the journey were not over, however, as the *Vita* relates:

While the ship was sailing towards Genoa, a violent tempest arose about ten miles offshore from the port of Pisa. The ship was so severely battered by the storm that ultimately it sank; some people were drowned and others, with God's help, were saved. Among the latter were Ramon and a companion of his, who lost all their

books and clothes and reached the shore in a boat, almost naked.<sup>59</sup>

For a man over seventy, all these tribulations could have had irreversible effects. Not for Ramon, however, for on reaching Pisa, he rewrote the works he had lost in the shipwreck. He also finished the last version of his *Art*, which he considered the definitive one, the *Ars generalis ultima*, and summarized it in the *Ars brevis*. The original Arabic version of the work he had written in Bougie, *Disputatio Raimundi christiani et Homeri sarraceni*, was lost in the wreck, but the Latin version rewritten in Pisa was preserved (1308). It recounts the bitter controversies that arose during his imprisonment, but reduces them to a single dispute with one adversary — Homer — who is portrayed in very negative terms. In this work, which he later presented to Pope Clement V to draw his attention to it, he sought to show that Muslim scholars, in keeping with the *kalam*, required arguments based on reason, not authority. And indeed Homer uses philosophical reasons to try to prove that the Christian dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation are impossible. This was both a challenge and a confirmation of the relevance of Llull's reflections about the need to resort to necessary reasons in order to convert the infidels.<sup>60</sup>

In 1314 Llull went on another missionary journey to Tunis and we know that in 1315 he was still there. During this long stay he relied entirely on a strategy based on prudence and assimilation: he brought letters of recommendation to the King of Tunis from James II of Aragon, he had the support of his compatriots, he wore Tunisian dress, and maintained cordial relations with the sultan Abû Zakariyâ al-Lihyâni, to whom he may have dedicated two works.<sup>61</sup>

But Llull's longest journey ever was to the Near East in the summer of 1301. He had heard that Ghazan, the Mongol Khan of Persia, had invaded Palestine and intended to subjugate it. Llull had long been very interested in the possibilities afforded by the Tartars, a very numerous and powerful people who occupied virtually all the Far East and much of the Near East, had no clearly-defined religion, and were distinctly hostile towards Islam. Converting the Tartars to Christianity (or at least setting up alliances) would provide an opportunity, in the short term, to recover the holy places in Palestine and, in the long term, to encircle the Muslims and drive them back. But when Llull arrived in Cyprus, he discovered that the news that had reached the opposite shore of the Mediterranean was not true: the Tartars had approached Palestine but had then retreated to attend to other fronts. During his stay in Cyprus, his servants tried to poison him. He was given hospitality by the grand master of the Order of the Temple, Jaume de Molay, until he recovered.<sup>62</sup>

Ramon Llull's last works date from December 1315 and were written in Tunis. After this he vanishes from history. He was about eighty-four years old. We do not even know whether he died in Tunis or, as seems more likely, after



returning to Majorca. It would be more accurate, in any case, to say that his physical presence vanished from history, because his works and ideas resounded and spread throughout the history of European culture for the ensuing seven hundred years in a way that not even Lull himself, perhaps, would have expected.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- [6] Jordi GAYÀ ESTELRICH. *Raimondo Lullo. Una teologia per la missione*. Translated by Domenico LANFRANCHI. *Eredità Medievale*, Jaca Book, Milan 2002.
- [7] Miquel BATLLORI. "Història político-religiosa: la intervenció de Sant Ramon de Penyafort" in *Obra Completa I: De l'Edat Mitjana*. Ed. Eulàlia DURAN; Prologue by Jordi RUBIÓ, 3i4, Valencia 1993, pp. 19-34.
- [8] Josep PERARNAU I ESPELT. "La «Disputació de cinc savis» de Ramon Lull. Estudi i edició del text català". *Arxiu Textos Catalans Antics* 5. Barcelona 1986, pp. 7-229.
- [9] Anthony BONNER. "L'apologètica de Ramon Martí i Ramon Lull davant de l'Islam i del judaisme". *El debat intercultural als segles XIII i XIV. Actes de les Primeres Jornades de Filosofia Catalana. Girona 25-27 d'abril del 1988*, Ed. Marcel Salleras, Estudi General No. 9, Col·legi Universitari, Girona 1989, pp. 171-185. The "unsuccessful missionary" has usually been identified with the Dominican Ramon Martí (see Éphrem LONGPRÉ. "Le B. Raymond Lulle et Raymond Martí, O.P.". *Butlletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana*, 24 (1933), pp. 269-271). However it is more likely, perhaps, that the reference was to another Dominican, André Longjumeau, as pointed out by Josep M. RUIZ SIMON. *L'Art de Ramon Lull i la teoria escolàstica de la ciència*, Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 1999, pp. 361-2, Note 501.
- [10] Ora LIMOR. *The Disputation of Majorca, 1286: A Critical Edition and Introduction*, Publications of the School of Graduate Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Faculty of Humanities, 2 vols., Jerusalem 1985). Lola BADIA. "La «Disputatio contra Iudeos» d'Inghetto Contardo". *Studia Lulliana*, No. 33 (1993 [1994]), pp. 47-50.
- [11] See David ABULAFIA. *A Mediterranean Emporium. The Catalan Kingdom of Majorca*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1994.
- [12] Thus, for instance, in Chapter 70 of the *Llibre de contemplació*: "22. You, Lord, were wise from the very time of your nativity and during the middle and the end of the days you spent in this world; but I was foolish from the beginning of my days until beyond the age of thirty, when the recollection of your wisdom and the desire to praise you and the remembrance of your passion awoke in me. 23. So, just as the sun shines with greater force in the middle of the day, so I, until the middle of my life, was foolish and lacking in wisdom. But your wisdom, Lord, is so great that it can give me as much wisdom during the rest of my life as though my whole life had been spent in good works." *Ramon Lull. Obres Essencials (OE)*, 2 vols. Barcelona 1957-60, Vol. II, p. 250.
- [13] Fernando DOMÍNGUEZ. "Idea y estructura de la «Vita Raymundi Lulii»". *Estudios Lulianos*, 27, (1987), pp. 1-20.
- [14] Jordi GAYÀ. "De conversione sua ad poenitentiam: reflexiones ante la edición crítica de «Vita coetanea»". *Estudios Lulianos*, 24, (1980), pp. 87-91.
- [15] J.N. HILLGARTH. *Diplomatari lul·lià: documents relatius a Ramon Lull i a la seva família*. Translated by L. CIFUENTES. Col·lecció Blaquerna 1, Universitat de Barcelona / Universitat de les Illes Balears, Barcelona- Palma de Mallorca 2001; see document No. 13.
- [16] Miquel BATLLORI. "L'entrevista de Ramon Lull amb Ramon de Penyafort a Barcelona". *Cuadernos de Historia Económica de Catalunya*, 21 (1980), pp. 9-11. Recently reproduced in *Obra Completa II: Ramon Lull i el lul·lisme*, Ed. Eulàlia DURAN; prologue by Albert HAUF. 3i4, Valencia 1993, pp. 45-46 and 87-93.
- [17] With respect to Latin, see Lola BADIA. "A propòsit de Ramon Lull i la gramàtica". *Estudis de llengua i literatura catalanes - XVIII. Miscel·lània Joan Bastardas 1*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1989, pp. 157-182, and id., *Teoria i pràctica de la literatura en Ramon Lull*. Assaig 10. Quaderns Cre-

- ma, Barcelona 1992, pp. 173-194. With regard to Arabic, see Fernando DOMÍNGUEZ. "Ramon Llull, «catalán de Mallorca», y la lengua árabe. Contexto sociolingüístico". *Literatura y bilingüismo. Homenaje a Pere Ramírez*, Problemata Literaria 15, Reichenberger, Kassel 1993, pp. 3-17.
- [18] Jordi GAYÀ. "El ambiente científico de Montpellier en los siglos XIII y XIV". *Estudios Lulianos*, 21, (1977), pp. 59-67. Anthony BONNER. "L'aprenentatge intel·lectual de Ramon Llull". *Studia in honorem prof. M. de Riquer* II. Quaderns Crema, Barcelona 1987, pp. 11-20. See also *Raimundi Lulli Opera latina, Tomus XX*, Ed. Jordi Gayà Estelrich, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis CXIII. Brepols, Turnhout, 1995, pp. ix-xi.
- [19] Charles LOHR. "Logica Algazelis: Introduction and Critical Text". *Traditio*, 21, (1965), pp. 223-290; Jordi RUBIÓ I BALAGUER. "La lògica del Gazzali posada en rims per en Ramon Llull" in *id.*, *Ramon Llull i el lul·lisme. Obres de Ramon Llull*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1985, pp. 111-166. On the *Llibre de contemplació*, see the edition referenced in Note 12.
- [20] Tomàs CARRERAS ARTAU, Joaquim CARRERAS ARTAU. *Historia de la filosofía española. Filosofía cristiana de los siglos XIII al XV*, Vol. I, facsimile edition of the original 1939 edition. Institut d'Estudis Catalans - Diputació de Girona 2001, p. 348.
- [21] *Llibre de contemplació*, "Pròleg", edition referenced in Note 12 (OE), Vol. II, p. 107.
- [22] Josep Enric RUBIO. *Literatura i doctrina al Llibre de Contemplació de Ramon Llull*. Editorial Saó, Valencia 1995, p. 21.
- [23] *Ibidem*, pp. 357-8.
- [24] Dominique URVOY. *Penser l'Islam. Les présupposés islamiques de l'Art de Llull*. Vrin, Paris 1980, p. 326.
- [25] *Llibre de contemplació*, Chapter 366 (OE II, p. 1252 et sqq.).
- [26] *Ibidem*.
- [27] Chapter 331. Cf. Chapter 363 (OE II, 1080. Cf. *ibidem*, 1235).
- [28] Chapters 362-3 and Chapter 364 (OE II, 1229 et sqq.).
- [29] For particular aspects of the transition from the *Llibre de contemplació* to the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, see Josep Enric RUBIO. *Les bases del pensament de Ramon Llull*. Institut Universitari de Filologia Valenciana - Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Valencia- Barcelona 1997.
- [30] On the relationship between Llull's *Art* and the *ars inveniendi*, see Josep M. RUIZ SIMON. *L'Art...*, referenced in Note 9, pp. 27-29 and 184-238.
- [31] Anthony BONNER. *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull. A User's Guide*. Brill, Leiden - Boston (MA) 2007, offers a useful and stimulating introduction to the function of these figures in argumentations regulated by the *Art*. For a more conventional introduction to these figures and the artistic devices, CARRERAS ARTAU, *Historia...* (referenced in Note 20) pp. 345 et sqq. still offers a highly enlightening presentation.
- [32] *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus VIII*, Ed. Hermogenes Harada, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis XXXIV. Brepols, Turnhout 1980, p. 280.
- [33] *Raymundi Lulli Opera Omnia*, Eds. Salzinger IVO and Franz Philipp WOLFF (Häffner, Mainz 1722; reprinted by F. Stegmüller, Frankfurt, 1965), II, iv, 51 (175).
- [34] *Libre de contemplació*, OE II, 1257. With regard to the 'promotional' way in which Llull builds his own image, see Lola BADIA. "Ramon Llull: autor i personatge" in Fernando DOMÍNGUEZ et al. (Eds.), *Aristotelica et Lulliana magistro doctissimo Charles H. Lohr, septuagesimum annum feliciter agenti dedicate*. The Hague 1995, pp. 355-75.
- [35] See *Art demonstrativa*, "Pròleg" in *Obres selectes de Ramon Llull (1232-1316)*, Ed. A. BONNER, Editorial Moll, Palma de Mallorca 1989, Vol. I, p. 290. For the links between the *Art* and the Aristotelian *ars demonstrandi*, see Josep M. RUIZ SIMON. *L'Art...* (referenced in Note 9), pp. 31-45, 204-208, 238-295.
- [36] *Analytica posteriora* I, 9. Cf. *Ars generalis ultima* "De prologo", Ramon LLULL. *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus XIV*. Ed. Alois MADRE, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis LXXV. Brepols, Turnhout 1986, pp. 5-6.
- [37] The transformation of Llull's understanding of the principles of his *Art* is analysed and interpreted in Josep Maria RUIZ SIMON. "La transformació del pensament de Ramon Llull durant les obres de transició cap a l'etapa ternària" in Maria Isabel RIPOLL PERELLÓ (Ed.). *Actes de les Jornades Internacionals Lul·lianes: Ramon Llull al segle XXI*. Col·lecció Blaquerna 5, Universitat de les Illes Balears - Universitat de Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca-Barcelona 2005.
- [38] See *Ars generalis ultima*, edition referenced in Note 36.
- [39] With reference to the Muslims, *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis*, Ed. Anthony BONNER, Nova Edició de les Obres de Ramon Llull II, Patronat Ramon Llull, Palma de Mallorca 1993, pp. 196-7: "But there are others among us who understand the glory morally and expose it spiritually, and they say that Mohammed spoke to people who were foolish and lacking in understanding through examples [...] And these are scholars in philosophy and natural science and great priests, and they are men who in some respects do not fully observe the commandments of our law, and for that reason among us they are considered almost as heretics, and they came to heresy by listening to logic and natural science. And for that reason there is agreement among us that no man dares to read logic or natural science openly."

- The “almost heretical” points of view described by the wise Muslim in this passage from Lull remind us of those expressed by Averroes in his *Decisive Treatise on the Connection between Religion and Philosophy*, which at the time was unpublished in Latin. On the subject of Judaism, see Eduard FELIU: «La controvèrsia sobre l'estudi de la filosofia en les comunitats jueves occitanocatalanes a la primeria del segle XIV: Alguns documents essencials del llibre *Minhat Quenaot* d'Abamari ben Mossé de Lunèl», *Tamid* No. 1, Barcelona 1997, pp. 65-131, especially pp. 110-122. This controversy dates back to the early 13th century and arose from the reactions to the work of Maimonides. It is interesting to note that in 1305 Salomó ben Adret, a Barcelona rabbi, cabbalist and acquaintance of Lull's, signed a cherem against those who studied “the books of the Greeks”, i.e. philosophy, before reaching the age of twenty-five. Finally it should not be forgotten that towards 1311 Lull was in favour of a ban on reading works of philosophy which (like those of Averroes) were “contrary to theology” (see *Liber natalis, Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus VI*. Ed. Hermogenes Harada, “Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis” XXXII, Brepols, Turnhout 1975, p. 69; *Liber de ente, Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus VII*. Ed. Hermogenes Harada, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis XXXIV. Brepols, Turnhout 1980, p. 242; *Vita coetanea, ibidem*, 303).
- [40] We borrow this last expression from the title of a classical article by Robert PRING-MILL. “Els reconaments de l'arbre exemplifical de Ramon Lull: la transmutació de la ciència en literatura”, included in Robert D.F. PRING-MILL. *Estudis sobre Ramon Lull*. Curial Edicions - Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1991, p. 307 *et sqq.*
- [41] On Lull's relations with France and his different visits to Paris, the book by Hillgarth referenced in Note 2 is essential reading.
- [42] On this particular visit to Paris and Lull's contacts with the university, see Albert SOLER I LLOPART. “El «Liber super Psalmum Quicumque» de Ramon Lull i l'opció pels tartars”. *Studia Lulliana*, 32, (1992), pp. 3-19 and *id.* “Ramon Lull and Peter of Limoges”. *Traditio*, 48 (1993), pp. 93-105.
- [43] On Lull's second stay in Paris, see Anthony BONNER. “L'Art de Lull com a alternativa a l'aristotelisme parisenc”, *Taula*, 37 (2002), pp. 11-19; also Ramon Lull. *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus XVIII*, Ed. Abraham SORIA FLORES, Fernando DOMÍNGUEZ, Michel SENELLART. Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis LXXX. Brepols, Turnhout 1991, pp. 15-26. On Le Myésier, see Hillgarth's book referenced in Note 2.
- [44] On Lull's third stay in Paris, see *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus V*, Ed. Helmut RIEDLINGER, Palma de Mallorca 1967, pp. 114-160.
- [45] See documents 41-43 in the *Diplomatari* referenced in Note 15.
- [46] On Lull's stays at the papal court in Rome, see Miquel Batllori's benchmark study “El lulismo en Italia. (Ensayo de síntesis)”. *Revista de Filosofía*, 2, Madrid (1943), pp. 253-313, 479-537; 3, (1944), p. 146, revised and translated into Catalan in *id.*, *Ramon Lull i el lulisme...* referenced in Note 16, pp. 221-335.
- [47] Josep PERARNAU I ESPELT. “Un text català de Ramon Lull desconegut: la «Petició de Ramon Lull al papa Celestí V per a la conversió dels infidels»”. Edició i estudi”. *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 1, Barcelona (1982), pp. 9-46.
- [48] Josep PERARNAU I ESPELT. “Bonifacio, fra Raimondo Lullo e Arnaldo da Villanova”. *Bonifacio VIII. Ideologia e azione politica. Atti del convegno organizzato nell'ambito delle celebrazioni per il VII centenario della morte. Città del Vaticano-Roma, 26-28 aprile 2004*. Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Rome 2006, pp. 423-432.
- [49] Ramon LLULL. *Disputa del clergue Pere i de Ramon, el Fantàstic. Llibre de la ciutat del món*. Ed. L. BADIA, “Traducció de l'obra llatina de Ramon Lull” 1, Brepols, Turnhout — Edendum, Santa Coloma de Queralt, forthcoming.
- [50] See documents 33, 35, 37-40 and 45-51 of the *Diplomatari* referenced in Note 15.
- [51] Fernando DOMÍNGUEZ. “«In civitate Pisana, in monasterio Sancti Domnini»: algunas observaciones sobre la estancia de Ramon Lull en Pisa (1307-1308)”. *Traditio*, 42, (Fordham University Press, New York 1986), pp. 389-437.
- [52] Margherita SPAMPINATO BERETTA. “Lulio in Sicilia”. *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Ramon Lull; il lulismo internazionale, l'Italia. Napoli, 30 e 31 marzo, 1 aprile 1989*. Istituto Universitario Orientale. Annali: Sezione Romanza XXXIV, 1. Naples 1992, pp. 145-162. Clifford R. BACKMAN. *The Decline and Fall of Medieval Sicily. Politics, Religion and Economy in the Reign of Frederick III, 1296-1337*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995, pp. 217-219.
- [53] Anthony BONNER. “Reducere auctoritates ad necessarias rationes”, *Actes de les Jornades Internacionals Lullianes. Ramon Lull al s. XXI. Palma, 1, 2 i 3 d'abril de 2004*. Ed. Maria Isabel RIPOLL PERELLÓ, Col·lecció Blaquerna 5, Universitat de les Illes Balears / Universitat de Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca-Barcelona 2005, pp. 49-52.
- [54] See the edition of the *Llibre del Gentil* referenced in Note 39.
- [55] On the evolution of Ramon's character, see the work by L. Badia referenced in Note 34, and Anthony BONNER. “Ramon Lull: autor, autoritat i il·luminat”. *Actes de l'Onzè Col·loqui Internacional de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes. Palma (Mallor-*



- ca), 8-12 de setembre del 1998. Ed. Joan MAS I VIVES, Joan MIRALLES I MONSERRAT, Pere ROSSELLÓ BOVER, I. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1998, pp. 35-60.
- [56] The most complete study of Llull's relations with the Muslim world remains Dominique Urvoy, (referenced in Note 24).
- [57] See the account of this stay in the *Vita coetanea*, edition referenced in Note 32, pp. 289-293.
- [58] Armand LLINARÈS. "Le séjour de Raymond Lulle à Bougie (1307) et la «Disputatio Raymundi Christiani et Hamar Saraceni»". *Estudios Lulianos*, 4 (1960), pp. 63-72.
- [59] See the account of this stay in the *Vita coetanea*, edition referenced in Note 32, pp. 297-301.
- [60] See *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus XXII*. Ed. Alois Madre, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis CXIV. Brepols, Tornhout 1998.
- [61] Armand LLINARÈS. "Les séjours de Raymond Lulle à Tunis et les derniers moments de sa vie". *Revue de la Méditerranée*, 20. (Paris-Algiers 1960), pp. 495-502.
- [62] Jordi GAYÀ. "Ramon Llull en Oriente (1301-1302); circunstancias de un viaje". *Studia Lulliana*, 37 (1997), pp. 25-78.

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